

THE
CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

VOL. I.]

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1817.

[NO. 25.

EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY JOSHUA T. RUSSELL.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

ON PRAYER—No. VII.

OUR last number on this subject has been so long in the hands of our readers, that perhaps the general train of discussion has been forgotten. The delay has been occasioned by circumstances entirely beyond our control, and which may still prevent that regularity of communication which is almost indispensable to preserve an interest in our inquiries. We shall, however, be as punctual, as our other duties will permit, until the series be closed.

We have considered the reasonableness of prayer; its object and medium, together with the agency necessary to help our infirmities in the discharge of the sacred obligation. We now proceed to other considerations equally necessary to be known and remembered, and without which it is impossible any man should offer his supplications with acceptance.

1. Our prayer must proceed from the *heart*. This is so very plain to every one who considers the spiritual nature of the divine law and the moral character of man, that it might almost be censured as trifling to argue the point. But, if we mistake not, there is much in the world called praying, which has nothing of that holy exercise save the name and the external form. And, if according to a notion not at all unpopular, religion itself consists in mere forms, utterly disconnected from any special power it may exert, we cannot perceive how prayer should ever be any thing else. We can then find an apology for every wavering affection and every wandering thought: nay, apology they need none; for they are not criminal. Mental effort and heart-felt emotion are not then essential to the integrity of religious forms; are foreign to the service of God, and must be reserved for the scientifick pursuits, the mercantile speculations, or political struggles of the day. Yet so men solve the awful problem of a sinner's hope, and rest their entire plea for acceptance before a heart searching God on the supposed value of external ceremony. Is the wretched sophism worth exposing? If so, then—prayer appeals to the love of Christ, for it is offered in his name. I draw nigh, through the rent veil of his flesh: his intercession in heaven proceeds on the merit of his sacrifice, for he has gone into the upper sanctuary, carrying along with him his own blood. This gives me boldness of approach, and confidence in pleading. And in scenes like these shall my heart take no interest?

Shall I stand by the cross without an emotion, without a tear? Is my nature susceptible of no reciprocal love? no feeling of gratitude? no tenderness of sympathy? no ardour of desire? We are ashamed to think argument necessary.—To draw nigh to God with our lips, while our heart is far from him, is palpable mockery: to defend it the very licentiousness of sophistry: to practise it, is enormity of crime, richly meriting the judgments of God. Let none attempt so to trifle with their own souls: the ministration of good things in the privileges of grace would prove to them “the savour of death unto death,” and eventuate in their heavier condemnation.

The duty is of higher claims. It is the communion the *soul* has with God, in whose image it has been formed: its earnest pleadings with him on principles of mysterious form and glorious magnitude: the offering of “a broken spirit”—and “a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” It calls forth feelings too lofty and hallowed for the heart that has not been renewed and sanctified by the spirit of God, to experience or cherish: it is the reply of filial affection to the voice of a reconciled father, and the inward actings of the spirit of adoption. “God hath sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying, abba, Father.” “I cried,” says the psalmist, “I cried with my *whole heart*; hear me, O Lord.” In fact, without this, it is not a mean of spiritual enjoyment: it gives no spiritual peace to the soul; quickens us for no duty, nor in the day of trouble does it return to our own bosom in any reviving influence. It has no saving attribute; no coincidence with the system of grace, no principle of assimilation to God, no connexion with that “faith without which it is impossible to please God, seeing it is with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness.”

We have now good reason to press home our rule, warning every man to take good heed that he present his offerings according to the law of the sanctuary. We are not asking him simply to accede to the truth we are asserting, but we call upon him to see that he regulate his personal devotions by it. His very acceptance depends upon it. The prayer of *faith* will save the sick, says the apostle. That is, this faith, which is a grace of the heart, wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, is the very principle on which we are heard. “If I regard sin in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” So the Scriptures account for many an unanswered prayer: the iniquity of the motive or feeling, from which it proceeds, takes from it all that sweet savour with which it should rise to the mercy seat:—“Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” But faith apprehends Christ, and fetches from the fulness of God the blessings we crave. O what prayers are uttered when the heart is thus truly and deeply engaged; and faith appears in lively exercise: the very stammerer learns to speak plainly, and the simpleton himself shines in intellectual glory. The Spirit in the heart enabling us to make intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered, gives a new and better aspect to human character, because it gives to human faculties their appropriate employment, and to human affections their proper exercise.

Indeed, so far as our intercourse with the people of God has extended, their chief complaint appears to be that their hearts are so little engaged, and that therefore they have much less of that religious enjoyment in fellowship with God, than they desire to have. Something intervenes to draw off their minds, and ere they are aware, their thoughts are like the fool's eyes, wandering on the mountains of vanity. If our paper should fall into the hands of an exercised christian, who has been in the habit of watching the movements of his own soul and the varieties of his own feeling, he will fully enter into our meaning: he will well recollect many a troubled moment he has spent because of the fickleness of his own heart.— Yet let him not be discouraged. Let him learn his greater need of living entirely on Christ, and be the more earnest, frequent and persevering in prayer, that his heart may be the more deeply interested. And indeed when the heart is thus engaged it is a moment of so much sweetness, that we do not wonder christians should be excessively grieved by their own wanderings, and anxiously inquire how they may be delivered from them. Never, no never, did the soul of man spend a happier moment, never did he realize more rational or more perfect enjoyment, than when, abstracted from the world and the things of the world, he gave himself up entirely to communion with Jehovah. It is the very ecstacy of heaven, where sin never enters; where the curse is no more known, and where the soul has pure, undisturbed and everlasting rest. And if he does not always enjoy these precious seasons, let him not despont: let him still wait upon the Lord, and still "call upon him out of a pure heart," "holding fast the confidence and rejoicing of his hope unto the end." For though he "walks in darkness and has no light," though he may have reason to complain with Job, "Behold I go forward, but he is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him," yet with Job also let him be satisfied, "the Lord knoweth the way I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

It may not be amiss here to offer a little consolation to some of God's people, who may not only be troubled with wanderings of thought, but may also have had blasphemous thoughts injected into their minds during their religious worship. They are apt to suppose that such suggestions defile them with guilt: nay, even to infer that they are not Christians. We have this not merely on hearsay evidence: we have travelled over the thorny path again and again. Yet we cannot accede to the conclusion which they deduce to their own embarrassment: nor are we disposed to surrender so easily to the enemy of our peace. We remember the Redeemer was so assailed:—"the tempter said unto him, if thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread—all these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Yet the Spirit bore him thence "holy, harmless, and undefiled:" and we believe the christian may endure similar trials, and "keep his garments clean and unspotted." Our guilt, under these circumstances,

never can lie in the mere suggestion; nor in any thing but consenting to it. If we harbour these thoughts, if we cherish them, if we approve of them, if we do not resist them, the case is altered: then indeed we have much cause for mourning and contrition before the Lord. When they cross the mind let us be assured the enemy is near, and “watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation.” If this simple thought can afford any comfort to our fellow pilgrims, let them thank God for it, and go on their way rejoicing.

The conclusion is, that we must honour God not only with our lips, but with the best feelings of our hearts: we must pray with the spirit and with the understanding, so that all our praise and thanksgiving shall be “melody in our hearts unto the Lord.” Beware that you grow not cold and languid, and your religious service degenerate into that miserable drudgery, which defrauds your own hearts, while it mocks your God. Walk with a perfect heart before him, and thus shall you be accepted in his Son, you shall obtain comfort in distress, victory in conflict, and shall find all things work together for your good.

THEOPHILUS.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Speeches at the thirteenth Anniversary.

(Continued from page 378.)

The Rev. GEORGE CLAYTON, (independent minister,) after a brief reference to the speech of the mover, proceeded as follows:

“These votes of thanks, though in some sense customary, and matters of course, are not unmeaning or unimportant. I always view them in the light of a testimony—solemnly and deliberately given—not merely to the individuals immediately concerned in them, but to the Scriptures themselves, and to the society which is devoted to the dispersion of them. When I look at that society, gentlemen, not as I behold it to-day, in this crowded hall, where all is acclamation and triumph, but when I view it in the calm retirement of the study, and as I have lately done, through the curtains of a sick chamber; I can truly say, I am wrapt in admiration of its constitution and movements; it comes over me in those forms of grandeur and majesty, which I have really no language to describe. I look with amazement and delight at the unencumbered simplicity of its plan; for it gives the Bible, and the Bible only—at the amplitude of its range; for the field is the world—at the multitude of its agents; for these are not easily calculated—at the vastness of its resources, which exceed the most sanguine expectations—at the magnificence of its successes; for these are now emblazoned in every dialect of the earth, and quartered on the escutcheon of many a crowned head in

Christendom. But, gentlemen, it is not precisely in these views, that the institution strikes my mind most forcibly—it is the characteristick spirit which it breathes; it is the evangelical aspect which it wears, it is the moral power it exerts, which render it the wonder of the world. In illustration of this, I hope I may be allowed to allude, though allusions have been well made already to the same topick—to the delightful harmony it has established and maintained among its friends. Those, as you all know, are composed of persons widely differing in minor points; they have been called a heterogeneous mass, a collection of discordant elements, a rope of sand; but here, at least, I must contend, all is congeniality and co-operation, and the most delightful harmony. There is no breach in the spirit of union, nor has the demon of discord yet stolen within the precincts of this earthly paradise. If it had been the wording of a particular creed, the constitution of a particular church, the increase and enlargement of a particular denomination, which had brought us here this day, we should have remained far enough apart, we should have been repelled from the centre which now attracts us, and driven and scattered as far as the east is from the west. But here we have one heart and soul: no sooner do we place our feet on the boards of the Bible society, than we get within an enchanted ring; but it is a safe and salubrious enchantment: no sooner do we come within the reach of the white wands of your committee men, than we feel the magick steal over us, and we lose the recollection of every thing but the Bible. I have heard this society compared, (and I love the comparison,) to Joseph, "a fruitful bough, whose branches run over the wall;" that wall of prejudice and separation which has too long divided us; and though on one side we see the rich and florid clusters of episcopal growth, and on the other, the less conspicuous productions of various denominations, yet when the combined juices are expressed, and when they are mingled in the entire produce of the vintage, every taste of peculiarity is lost; the wine is the wine of the kingdom, and it exhilarates the heart both of God and of man.

"And it is surely matter of joy, that this same spirit runs through all the descending gradations of this institution. You, my lord, and gentlemen, have certainly clothed the society from head to foot in the garment of charity—you have discovered the true seamless vest, and have, in this room, beaten out and composed that fragrant unguent which goes down even to the skirts of the garment.

"But I am not more struck with the harmony which is maintained among the friends of the institution, than with the forbearance shown to her enemies. All have not come into her measures; she has certainly not conciliated, as some minds anticipated, the smile of universal complacency. On some occasions, she has been called on to vindicate her principles, and exonerate her innocence from charges founded in prejudice and misapprehension; but what, I ask, has been the spirit of the society when she has been reluctantly dragged into the arena of controversy? It has been a spirit

of forbearance, conciliation, and forgiveness; it has been the meekness and the gentleness of Christ. I will not undertake to say, that in some of the subordinate parts of the machine, there may not have been too much friction; some of the under workmen may have been a little pettish and over-heated; some of the inferior secretaries, like myself, may have betrayed much of the irritation of zeal; but when we have appealed to the parent, and said, 'my Father, shall we smite them? shall we smite them?' the answer has uniformly been, 'smite them *not*: wherefore shouldest thou smite those who have been taken captives by our sword and our bow?' It is a wise maxim never to lose a friend, never to provoke an enemy; but the height of wisdom is to transform an enemy into a friend. And this is the hourly policy and practice of this society. If, therefore, an angry movement has at any time been made, and we have been tempted to call down fire from heaven, because of unprovoked aggression, *your* admirable secretaries have put an extinguisher on it, and said, in the temper of mild rebuke, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.' So that your institution, gentlemen, though it bears the marks and scars of the wounds it has received, imitates the spirit of him it serves, and says 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.'—It holds out the olive branch of peace, and tenders the hand of reconciliation; and in this its magnanimity is transcendently apparent.

"In the scale of worldly greatness, he is the hero who says, 'I will not brook an injury—I will resent it:' in christianity, he is most truly great, who can say, 'I will forgive it.'

"I wish to beg your lordship's attention to one more feature conspicuous in this institution, which is the picture of *disinterestedness* it presents to the view of society, and of mankind at large; and I think this particular feature has not had a due portion of notice on some former occasions. It is very obvious, that men may make costly sacrifices for the acquisition of great compensating advantages, and may devote their time and property to receive a recompense of abundant gain; but I ask what gain do the numerous agents employed in this society, obtain from coming into contact with it? I do not, of course, speak of those who have real occupation in the secular affairs of the society, and are specifically called to offices where pecuniary recompense is necessary and just, but I speak of those renowned and admirable men, your secretaries, and of all those, who follow with humbler footsteps in their train; and I contend, that in connecting themselves with this society, they are out of pocket; they are often thrown out of the way of preferment, and have to wade through dishonour as well as honour: through evil report as well as good report. No sordid, selfish blot cleaves to the unsullied hand of this christian institution; our institution spends, and is spent solely, for the glory of God, and the good of the human race, irrespective of the meanner objects of ease, or wealth, or fame. A picture this of *religious disinterestedness*, worthy the service of Him, who, though he was

rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.

"I will not trespass longer on your time, but merely to mention one other feature of excellence, which has often struck me, and with which I shall close; namely, that this institution does unequivocally ascribe all the glory of what it has designed and achieved, to the only wise God. In proof of this, I refer to what fell from the lips of your admirable president. The Alpha and Omega of that report which he has read, has been to annihilate human instrumentality, and to exalt divine agency; this was the tendency of its concluding strains, in which it did homage to the Lord God of Israel, who alone doeth wondrous things, and prayed that the whole earth might be filled with *his* glory. Never does this society charm so much, as when it humbles itself and its achievements, and says, 'Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name be all the glory.' It was, my fellow-subjects, a gratifying circumstance, which is reported to have occurred at the coronation of our beloved sovereign, (whom may God long preserve, and speedily restore!) When the youthful monarch passed through that ceremony, he is reported to have inquired, whether it was customary to receive the memorials of our Saviour's death with the crown upon the head; to which the officiating archbishop replied, there was no established law on the occasion; upon which the sovereign immediately put off the crown, and deposited it at the foot of the altar, while he prostrated himself in a posture of profound humiliation. It is precisely what the society has done to-day, and will continue to do, as I hope, till the latest day of its existence. Let it not be forgotten, that it was when Nebuchadnezzar swelled on the lofty turrets of that city which he had raised as a monument of his glory, that a watcher, and an holy one from heaven, was sent to rebuke his pride, and to terminate his dominion. It was when Herod, on a set day, arrayed in gorgeous apparel, made an oration unto the people, and they cried, 'It is the voice of a god, and not of a man,' that the angel of the Lord smote him, and he was eaten of worms, because he gave not to God the glory. And so soon as the worm of pride shall eat into the heart of this society, so soon as this canker shall corrode that spreading tree, under whose shade the nations are reposing, so soon may we bid farewell to the prosperity of our institution. But while harmony prevails, and forbearance is exemplified, while disinterestedness reigns, and the glory of all that is accomplished, is unreservedly ascribed to the King of Heaven, so long this institution will realize, what I am sure is the wish of its warmest admirers and best friends, '*Esto perpetua!*' May it flourish forever!"

The Hon. sir George Grey, bart. in moving the thanks of the society to their royal highnesses the dukes of York, Kent, Cumberland, Sussex, and Cambridge, and to his highness the duke of Gloucester, for their continued patronage of the object of the society, stated: "I have had repeated communications with ships of foreign nations, most

of which have gladly received the Scriptures; through your institution, they have been able to obtain them in their own languages. The captains and officers of his majesty's ships shows a readiness to receive them from the admiralty, the Naval and Military Bible Society, and other sources."

Extracts from the twenty-second Report of the London Missionary Society, May, 1816.

SOUTH AFRICA.

(Continued from page 380.)

GRIQUA TOWN,

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GRIQUAS,

(formerly called *Bastard Hottentots*.)

NORTH OF THE GREAT RIVER.

At this important station, which is the most distant of all our African settlements, Mr. Anderson and Mr. Janz have laboured many years, and with no small degree of success.

It is with deep concern that the directors have now to report the death of their pious and faithful missionary, Mr. Janz. In our last, we stated the death of Mrs. Janz; there is reason to think that his attention to her, during her illness, and his grief on account of her death, were the means of hastening his own dissolution; he was carried off by a rapid decline. Mr. Janz was a man of an excellent spirit; eminent for faith, self-denial, and holy zeal for God; an active, faithful, disinterested missionary. The people placed the greatest confidence in him. He visited them from house to house, and he had generally some of them at his own for instruction. His zeal continued to the end; and during the last days of his illness, he urged Mr. Saas, who providentially visited Griqua Town at that time, frequently to preach Christ to the people; and wished to arise from his bed, to ring the bell himself, for calling them together. He died, after being two hours almost continually in prayer.

In the last letter that Mr. Janz wrote, he stated, that the four native brethren, set apart to missionary work at Graaff Reinet, were exceedingly zealous in visiting all the kralls of Corannas and Bushmen. Mr. Janz had lately baptized a number of persons, in Mr. Anderson's absence, and many more were looking forward to that ordinance. He pleaded strongly for an increase of the number of missionaries at that place.

Mr. Helm, who laboured with Mr. Saas at Bethesda, having been obliged to leave that place on account of his health, has now joined Mr. Anderson, at Griqua Town, to supply the place of our deceased brother.

An auxiliary missionary society has been established in Griqua Town; the subscribers to which, having no money, (for money is utterly unknown in that part of the world,) have contributed property, which is to be sold for the benefit of the society.

The following is a list of the subscriptions:

Elephant's teeth, 30 pounds,	One ox,
Nine young bulls,	Twenty-three sheep,
Four heifers,	Five goats,

To remedy the inconvenience sustained by the people, (who have now made considerable progress in civilization,) by their want of a circulating medium, the directors are now procuring for them a coinage of silver tokens.

Mr. Read, considering Griqua Town as a central station of great importance, is of opinion that a printing press should be established there; a measure which the directors highly approve.

BETHESDA.

(Formerly called Orlam's Krall, on the Great River, about mid-way between Griqua Town and Pella.)

Mr. Saas and Mr. Helm have laboured at this station; where many, we trust, have been converted to God. More than 80 had been baptized in the course of one year. Mr. Helm having been obliged, on account of his health, to remove, another missionary must, as soon as possible, be sent to Bethesda. In the mean time, Mr. Saas has agreed to remain among the Corannas, and even remove with them from place to place, as occasion may require.

GREAT NAMAQUA COUNTRY.

KLIP FOUNTAIN.

(About two days' journey north of the Great River, and not far from the former station called Warm Bath.)

Mr. Schmelen, on his return from the Damara country, which he went to explore, fell in with a krall of Namaquas, some of whom had formerly resided at the Warm Bath. At first they were greatly alarmed at the appearance of himself and his people, and hid themselves behind the rocks and bushes, being apprehensive of the approach of Africander, whose name was terrifick throughout all that country. But finding that it was a peaceful missionary who had arrived, they expressed the highest degree of joy; and having heard him preach, they, with Flemerius their chief, at their head, earnestly entreated him to continue among them. Mr. Schmelen would have declined this, as he wished to begin a mission elsewhere; but the people would take no denial; they would not suffer him to leave them; they detained him almost by force; he was therefore constrained to abide with them, and his compliance filled their hearts with joy.

It was not long before he also had reason to rejoice in this determination. Many persons received the word, accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. A concern about religion became general; and when the last account came away, he had baptized twenty persons on a credible profession of their faith in Jesus.

The business of civilization, the constant concomitant of evangelical religion, immediately commenced. The missionary began a

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school, in which he had soon 140 children, who learned to read and write; but having no paper, a sheep skin was substituted, on which fine sand was spread, and a reed served the purpose of a pen. The particulars of the awakenings here, are some of the most remarkable that have occurred in our knowledge.

It is absolutely necessary that another missionary should be sent to the help of Mr. Schmelen as soon as possible.

(Conclusion in our next.)

FROM THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

ACCOUNT OF THE HINDOOS.

State of Civilization.

(Continued from page 348.)

“But even the Pariahs are not the most wretched cast in India. In the lowest depths of misery and oppression, there is a lower still. The Molungers, or salt boilers, in the Sunderbunds, exist under the government of Bengal, and that government derives nearly a million annually from the most shocking system of slavery that ever has been described. This miserable generation are, like all other casts, born to their employment; but, unlike other casts, they would flee from it, if guards were not posted at every avenue by which they could escape. They inhabit a sandy shore, surrounded with an immense wilderness full of snakes and tigers, and intersected by a labyrinth of water. The innumerable islands, which the various rivers form along the coast, are inhabited only by wild beasts. The tiger indeed is lord of the region. These poor wretches, while working at the salt pans on the long spots of land which project into the sea from the jungle, keep always a look out for tigers on the opposite bank; and when one is seen coming, they have no alternative but to hide themselves in holes, which they have dug for the purpose, having no arms wherewith to defend themselves. Holes dug in the sand are but a feeble protection. Long experience has taught the tiger that these men are his prey, and he often digs them out with his claws!”

This representation, striking, and seemingly incredible as it is, is given on the authority of a gentleman who went to India with high notions of Hindoo civilization, and who from a residence of many years in that country, had the best means of understanding the characters of those whom he describes. In its main features the picture is undoubtedly correct. Who then can contemplate it without feeling his heart melt with compassion for these wretched fellow creatures?

Mythology and Worship.—It would be an endless task to detail the mythological fables of the Hindoos. Besides, most of them are too ridiculous even for the nursery. Their belief in short is this. There is one Supreme Being who exists in a threefold form, represented by a man, a woman and a serpent; or as the emblems of power, love and wisdom.—This Supreme Being first created a woman, who, in a transport of joy, brought forth three eggs, from which were produced the three principal deities, *Bramha*, *Vish-*

nou, and *Sivd*. The respective offices of these were, to create, preserve, and destroy mankind. They all had wives and from them are descended an innumerable multitude of inferior divinities. As the Supreme Being is supposed to be exalted above all attention to human affairs, he is not an object of worship. Bramha, the Creator, is worshipped by the Brahmins, who offer up prayers and perform certain ablutions in honour of him, but he has no temple erected to his memory. He is seen in the Temple of Vishnou in a human form, having four heads and four arms. Vishnou, in performing his office as Preserver, is supposed to have become incarnate nine times, and is worshipped under all the different forms he assumed in his avatars or descents, but is generally represented as a man with four arms. Sivd is worshipped under two characters, as the Destroyer and Reproducer. In the first, he is a terrifick image, with his tongue pretended, features distorted, and bearing a trident symbolick of fire. In the second, he is represented under a compound form, part male and part female. His images are too gross for description. The subordinate divinities are worshipped under innumerable forms.—Their images are made of stone, or wood painted, and overlaid with copper, brass, silver, or gold. They are of the most clumsy workmanship. Every house is a mint for gods. Hewed out from a tree in the morning, worshipped devoutly during the day, and thrown into the nearest tank at evening, is often the short, and eventful history of their deification. Every family has its household god, which is placed at the entry of the building, and honoured by offerings of rice, flowers, &c. In case of ill luck these deities are treated very harshly; are reprimanded, starved, and if they give no relief, pretty surely disgraced! Besides these, which are supposed to represent real divinities, the various attributes of their principal gods, are worshipped under their symbols.—Thus the cow is reverenced as an emblem of the divine benevolence, the cow contributing most to the support of the Hindoo. Even natural objects are themselves worshipped. The Greeks and Romans had their divinities presiding over rivers and groves, but the more simple Hindoo devoutly pays his homage to the waters of the Ganges itself!

The religious, and indeed the political code of the Hindoos, is contained in a vast number of sacred books called Shasters; the four principal of which are the *Vedas*, given by Bramha himself some hundred thousands of years ago. The others are the voluminous commentaries of ancient Brahmins; and, though not of divine origin, are thought to be of great authority. These, amidst a mass of extravagant fiction, peurile detail, in some instances exhibit correct views of the Divine Being, and inculcate a sublime morality. No one can withhold his approbation from the following sentiment: "As God is immaterial, he is above all conception; as he is invisible, he can have no form; but from what we behold of his works, we may conclude he is *eternal, omnipotent*, and present every where." —Nor from this—"Hospitality is to be exercised even to an enemy when he cometh into thine house; the tree doth not withhold its

shade even from the wood-cutter; good men extend their charity even to the vilest animals; the moon doth not withhold her light even from the chandalah."

But were we to judge of the character of their sacred books, from these specimens, we should err egregiously. While they teach there is one Supreme Divinity, they likewise teach the existence of a multitude of subordinate deities; and while they sometimes inculcate moral sentiments, their general tendency is to sap the foundations of all morality. Still, the Hindoo religion, as contained in the shasters, is *comparatively* pure, and may perhaps be dignified with the name of deism. But this is nothing to the common people. They receive their religion entirely from their teachers. None but the Bramins are allowed to read the shasters, and of these, none but the pundits pretend to understand them. Many of their priests do not know a shaster from an almanack! The lower castes are not allowed to even hear their sacred books read. If a pariah falls into this misfortune, though by accident, he is punished by having melted lead poured into his ears! The Braminical system is, indeed, only a compound of darkness and cruelty.

In its doctrines it teaches the most gloomy fatalism. Every man's destiny is fixed at his birth, and it is vain for him to struggle to alter his condition. If he sins, he could not help it; if he is miserable, it was the decree of fate. Men are not free agents. Every man is a part of God, and does what God impels him to. The influence of such a belief is, to sink the mind into despondency. Nor is this counteracted by the hopes of a better state of existence. The Hindoos do, indeed, believe in future happiness and misery. Of heaven they have six regions, and of hell seven. But there is nothing consoling in this belief. The erring native who dies with any sin unatoned, expects to be sent to hell and tormented for a season proportioned to his guilt, and then remanded back to earth to inhabit a jackall, toad, musqueto, or some noxious animal, until he is sufficiently purified to enter the lowest heaven. He there passes through a progressive course of happiness, until he is at last absorbed in the divine essence. The height of expected bliss is to lose all *self-consciousness*, and to be swallowed up in the supreme mind, as a drop of water in the ocean!

The practical part of this religion consists in prayers, ablutions, fastings, and a great variety of unmeaning, and often cruel ceremonies. In their prayers, the firmament, the sun, the moon, and the elements are most frequently addressed—as the following: "Salutation unto thee, oh air! Even thou art Brumha, present to our apprehension. Thee will I call present Brumha, thee will I name the right one, thee will I pronounce the true one; preserve me, preserve the teacher, be propitious!" Their ablutions are frequent, and those made in the Ganges most efficacious. They often perform the most wearisome pilgrimages to be washed in its waters, and desire to be laid upon its banks when about to die. Their fasts are prescribed, and are of twelve kinds, some of them lasting fifteen days. The following is one for a week. The first day the subject

lives entirely upon milk—the second, upon milk curds—the third, he tastes nothing but melted butter—the fourth, his disgusting beverage is the urine of a cow—the fifth, the excrements of that holy animal are his allotted food—sixth, water is his only nourishment; and the seventh is a total fast! Their ceremonies are innumerable, and the most shameful indecencies constitute a part of their worship. In many of their temples are select bands of young and beautiful females, trained up in every elegant and fascinating accomplishment, who, by the prostitution of their persons, promote both the service of their gods, and the revenues of their priests. Other rites are as frivolous as these are immoral. The Hindoo sprinkles himself with the dung of a cow as a preservative against the ills of life, and is taught that if he die holding the tail of that animal between his hands, he will in this manner be transported to the land of everlasting happiness!

(To be concluded in our next.)

FROM THE PANOPLIST.

DOMESTICK.

STATE OF RELIGION IN MASSACHUSETTS.

Narrative of the state of religion, prepared by a Committee of the General Association of Massachusetts Proper, at their meeting June 24, 1817.

(Concluded from p. 382.)

Leaving this commonwealth, we find, in other regions of our country, many things to gladden our hearts.

The report from *The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church*, gives an encouraging view of the state of religion and morality, within the limits of that highly respectable body.

Embracing, as it does, the middle, western and southern states, a territory of vast extent, including large and populous regions, comparatively destitute of religious privileges, we see within its bounds indeed, much to awaken our sympathy and grief. Affecting is the consideration, that a large proportion of the people in those regions, are strangers to the advantages of a regular christian ministry, and that thousands are annually dying without the means of grace. But we are happy in possessing unequivocal evidence, that, in the western part of the union, where the tide of infidelity and licentiousness had, until lately, threatened to sweep away every vestige of truth and godliness, He who stilleth the waves of the sea, hath uttered his voice, and that tide is arrested in its desolating course. In many places where the enemies of the Gospel, a few years since, set their faces against its holy doctrines and institutions, with unblushing hardihood, an open opposer of christianity can now hardly be found. This great alteration in the publick views and feelings, through a large extent of the western country, is as-

cribed, under God, to the wide dissemination of the Scriptures by Bible societies, and the agency of diligent and faithful missionaries.

Coming into the middle states, we are presented with a view of increasing prosperity to the church at large, and of very signal effusions of the Spirit, in several parts of the vineyard. In the towns of *Newark*, *Elizabethtown* and *Orange*, in New-Jersey, many have, it is hoped, experienced a work of divine grace in their hearts. In several parts of the state of New-York, very large accessions have been made to the kingdom of Christ, and many sinners are still fleeing to his standard.

Pursuing our northward course, we enter the favoured state of *Connecticut*. Here we find twelve associations of ministers, all connected with their General Association, and united, to an uncommon degree, in religious sentiment, affection and practice. Of the two hundred congregational churches in this state, between 160 and 170 are supplied with pastors.

Although our brethren in Connecticut cannot record such wonders of grace within the last year, as they have formerly witnessed, yet they behold with joy the precious fruits of those numerous and powerful revivals, for which that state has been distinguished.

A considerable number of towns, however, have, within the year past, been favoured with the out-pourings of the Spirit; and many hundreds have been added to the churches connected with the General Association.

Numerous benevolent societies have been recently formed, and are supported by an increasing patronage. Among these, we particularly notice a *Domestick Missionary Society* for building up the waste places within the state; a *Society for educating pious and indigent young men for the Gospel ministry*; a *school for educating heathen youth*; and an *Asylum for the instruction of the Deaf and Dumb*. These, with many other institutions of the same general character, receive a liberal support, and exert an extensive and salutary influence.

In *New-Hampshire*, the cause of truth, we have reason to believe, is gradually gaining ground; the fruits of former revivals still appear; and many towns have recently been blessed by the special effusions of the Holy Spirit. Catechetical institutions have been much encouraged, and promise great good to the rising generation. The monthly concert for prayer is generally observed by the churches in this state.

While attending to the report of our brethren from *Vermont*, we felt mingled emotions of joy and sorrow. Not one half of the towns in that state are supplied with evangelical and well educated pastors; in some places destructive errors extensively prevail; and, in some instances, churches have become nearly extinct. There is, however, a brighter side of the picture. He, who can raise an army from a valley of dry bones, has quickened the thousands of dead souls, and caused them to rejoice in his salvation. It is believed, that in each of the following towns, more than a *hundred*, and in some of them more than *two hundred*, have been made the subjects

of renewing grace: *Castleton, Benson, Fairhaven, Hubbardton, Brandon, Middlebury, Cornwall, New-Haven, Putney, Westminster, Wilmington, Montpelier* and *Danville*. More than thirty other towns in this state have been blessed with special revivals. We rejoice to hear that the great work which prevailed in Middlebury, extended to the college in that town; and several of the students were sharers in its blessings. It is probable, that, in no previous year, has Vermont been so highly favoured by the out-pourings of the Spirit, and the rich displays of grace in the conversion of sinners. Harmony and christian affection are generally observable in the churches in this state, as well as those of New-Hampshire.

On the whole, though we find much to deplore, we see more to animate and comfort our hearts. God has not withdrawn his spirit from our land, nor has he forgotten to do us good. The day in which we live, is a day of wonders. The glorious things that have been spoken of the city of God, are in course of rapid fulfilment. One spirit seems to animate the christian world; a spirit of love to Christ, and zeal for the prosperity of his kingdom. Much of this spirit appears in our land. An increasing harmony is manifest among the ministers and friends of the Redeemer. The fervent prayers of thousands daily ascend, as incense, to the throne of God. Nor do they ascend in vain. Jehovah hears, and he will answer. He will arise, and plead his own cause, and fill the earth with his glory. The sabbath of the world shall surely come. *Hath he said? and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken? and shall he not make it good?* Let us wait upon the Lord, and never faint.

MISCELLANEOUS.

FROM THE FEDERAL GAZETTE.

We have been favoured with the copy of a letter addressed to the Rev. Dr. Jennings, with a request that it might be published. It was written by one of the unfortunate men in the state penitentiary, on behalf of himself and his fellow-prisoners, in consequence of the interest excited by a discourse addressed to them by the reverend doctor. It will be gratifying to the citizens of Maryland, to receive this proof of reformation in the minds of men, whose misconduct has rendered it necessary to inflict on them the punishment which is now producing such happy effects.

(*Maryland Penitentiary, 9th Sept.*)

“REVD. SIR—The kind part you apparently took in our behalves on Sunday last; your encouraging observations, and the feeling manner in which they were delivered, have left deep impressions highly favourable to yourself, and to your subject.

“Your matter and manner have convinced us that you are in possession of all those philanthropick and generous feelings which constitute the christian, and do honour to the human heart; that you are divested of all those unhappy prejudices which shut the door of society against the emancipated penitent felon, and, thereby, but too

frequently, leave the unfortunate no alternative between starving or returning to vicious habits; that you feelingly and sympathizingly enter into fellowship with us in all the afflicting sensations incident to our situations and future prospects; and that you have tears ready to shed over every unfortunate convict struggling with desires of amending his past life by the rectitude of his future conduct. You have left impressions that will not soon be eradicated, on the minds of upwards of 200 men, whose dispositions differ almost as much as their faces. Your superior arguments have edified some and pleased the whole; and we are persuaded, your mild and impressive manner has done more, in awaking us to a sense of our extreme unworthiness, than all the anathemas which might (perhaps with some propriety) have been thundered against us. In short, sir, some have been benefited, and all, so charmed with your encouraging lesson, that we have unanimously concluded that it was our duty thus to acknowledge ourselves under deep and lasting obligations to you; and earnestly, but humbly, request you will continue your kind attention to us, by devoting some part of your much valued time, in preaching to your unworthy, but real well-wishers.

“Firmly believing you will one day reap the reward of those that administer comfort to the afflicted prisoner, we are, with sentiments of gratitude, reverend sir, in behalf of ourselves and of our fellow-prisoners, real well-wishers for your temporal and eternal felicity.

“Signed,

BENJ. WILSON,
CHAS. WILSON,
JOHN R. REID,
EDWD. SPAIN,
WM. PEARCE.”

“*The Baltimore Society for aiding the Theological Seminary of the General Assembly.*”

The first annual meeting of the society agreeably to the constitution, was held at the First Presbyterian Church, on Monday the 20th inst. at 6 o'clock, P. M. when the following gentlemen were elected officers of the society for the year ensuing.

Roswell L. Colt, *President*; John McHenry, Harmanus Boggs, *Vice-Presidents*; E. L. Finley, *Secretary*; Oliver H. Neilson, *Treasurer*; Andrew Wallace, John T. Barr, E. P. Barrow, Wm. H. Freeman, Walton Gray, Peregrine Janvier, *Board of Managers*.

The Rev. James Inglis, D. D. was chosen to preach a sermon to the society at their next annual meeting.

By order, E. L. FINLEY, *Secretary*.

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